

*Amendments to the Claims*

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Claims 1-113 (Cancelled).

114. (Currently Amended) A computer program product comprising a ~~tangible~~ non-transitory computer-readable storage medium having instructions stored thereon, the instructions comprising:

first instructions, executable at a user station, ~~for selecting~~ to select among a plurality of available online services to support an application function, wherein the first instructions form an application programming interface (API) configured to provide a generic client interface for communicating a functional request associated with the application function to any one of the plurality of available online services;

second instructions, executable at the user station, ~~for directing~~ to direct the establishment and use of a communication link between the user station and an online service selected from the plurality of available online services; and

third instructions, executable at the user station, ~~for presenting~~ to present a graphical user interface, ~~generating~~ generate the functional request, and ~~communicating~~ communicate the functional request to the online service using the API,

wherein portions of the third instructions are downloaded from the online service, and

wherein the third instructions are configured to receive via the API a response to the functional request from the online service in the background, thereby permitting the graphical user interface to continue operation.

115. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 114, further comprising a set of translators and protocol drivers for establishing the communication link between the user station and the online service.

116. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 114, further comprising protocol translation instructions for establishing the communication link between the user station and the online service.

117. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 114, wherein the API is configured to interconnect the online service selector function and the communications function.

118. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 114, further comprising data transport instructions for effectuating data transfers between the user station and the online service via the established communication link.

119. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 118, wherein the data transport instructions use an object manifest to effectuate data transfers.

120. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 119, wherein the API is configured to modify the object manifest.

121. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 120, wherein the API is configured to interconnect the data transfer function and a high-level software entity that can be invoked to modify the object manifest.

122. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 120, wherein the API is configured to interconnect the data transfer function and a high-level user interface that enables the user station to modify the object manifest.

123. (Cancelled).

124. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 114, wherein the first instructions are further configured to present a list of the available online services.

125. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 114, further comprising data transport instructions for effectuating data transfers between the user station and a selected one of the available online services via a non-proprietary network.

126. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 125, wherein the non-proprietary network comprises the Internet.

127. (Cancelled).

128. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 114, further comprising database function instructions for presenting a different database function for each different online service by a corresponding database function.

129. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 128, wherein portions of the database function instructions are downloaded from a corresponding online service.

130. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 114, further comprising general purpose user interface instructions for facilitating the presentation of the graphical user interface.

131. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 114, wherein the graphical user interface operates as a customized element of a common user interface software package.

132. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 114, wherein the first instructions are updateable from a remote source for expanding the number of available online services.

133. (Currently Amended) A user station, comprising a processor and a tangible computer-readable medium having instructions stored thereon, the instructions comprising:

first instructions, executable at the user station, ~~for selecting~~ to select among a plurality of available online services to support an application function, wherein the first computer program code includes an application programming interface (API) configured to provide a generic client interface for communicating a functional request associated with the application function to any one of the available online services;

second instructions, executable at the user station, ~~for directing~~ to direct the establishment and use of a communication link between the user station and an online service selected from the plurality of available online services; and

third instructions, executable at the user station, ~~for presenting to present~~ a graphical user interface, ~~generating~~ generate the functional request, and ~~communicating~~ communicate the functional request to the online service using the API,

wherein the user station is configured to download at least portions of the third instructions ~~are downloaded~~ from the online service, and

wherein the third instructions are configured to receive, via the API, a response to the functional request from the online service in the background, thereby permitting the graphical user interface to continue operation.

134. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, further comprising a set of translators and protocol drivers for establishing the communication link between the user station and the online service.

135. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, further comprising protocol translation instructions for establishing the communication link between the user station and the online service.

136. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the API is configured to interconnect the online service selector function and the communications function.

137. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, further comprising data transport instructions for effectuating data transfers between the user station and the online service via the established communication link.

138. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 137, wherein the data transport instructions use an object manifest to effectuate data transfers.

139. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 138, wherein the API is configured to modify the object manifest.

140. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 139, wherein the API is configured to interconnect the data transfer function and a high-level software entity that can be invoked to modify the object manifest.

141. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 139, wherein the API is configured to interconnect the data transfer function and a high-level user interface that enables the user station to modify the object manifest.

142. (Cancelled).

143. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the first program code is further configured to present the user station with a list of the available online services.

144. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, further comprising data transport instructions for effectuating data transfers between the user station and a selected one of the available online services via a non-proprietary network.

145. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 144, wherein the non-proprietary network comprises the Internet.

146. (Cancelled).

147. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, further comprising database function instructions, for presenting a different customized database function for each different online service by a corresponding database function.

148. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 147, wherein portions of the database function instructions are downloaded from a corresponding online service.

149. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, further comprising general purpose user interface instructions for facilitating the presentation of the graphical user interface.

150. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the graphical user interface operates as a customized element of a common user interface software package executable at the user station.

151. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the first instructions are updateable from a remote source for expanding the number of available online services.

152. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the user station is a personal computer.

153. (Currently Amended) A computer program product comprising a ~~tangible~~ non-transitory computer-readable storage medium having instructions stored thereon, the instructions comprising:

first instructions, executable at a user station, that form an application programming interface (API) configured to provide a generic client interface for communicating a functional request associated with an application function to any one of a plurality of available online services;

second instructions, executable at the user station, ~~for-directing to direct~~ the establishment and use of a communication link between the user station and an online service selected from the plurality of available online services; and

third computer program code, executable at the user station, ~~for-presenting to present~~ a graphical user interface, ~~generating~~ generate the functional request, and ~~communicating~~ communicate the functional request to the online service using the API,

wherein portions of the third computer program code are downloaded from the online service, and

wherein the third instructions are configured to receive via the API a response to the functional request from the online service in the background, thereby permitting the graphical user interface to continue operation.

154. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 153, further comprising a set of translators and protocol drivers for establishing the communication link between the user station and the online service.



155. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 153, further comprising protocol translation instructions for establishing the communication link between the user station and the online service.

156. (Cancelled).

157. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 153, further comprising data transport instructions for effectuating data transfers between the user station and the online service via the established communication link.

158. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 157, wherein the data transport function uses an object manifest to effectuate data transfers.

159. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 158, wherein the API is configured to modify the object manifest.

160. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 159, wherein the API is configured to interconnect the data transfer function and a high-level software entity that can be invoked to modify the object manifest.

161. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 159, wherein the API is configured to interconnect the data transfer function and a high-level user interface that enables the user station to modify the object manifest.

162. (Cancelled).

163. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 153, wherein the first instructions are further configured to present a list of the available online services.

164. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 153, further comprising data transport instructions for effectuating data transfers between the user station and a selected one of the available online services via a non-proprietary network.

165. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 164, wherein the non-proprietary network comprises the Internet.

166. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 153, further comprising database function instructions for presenting the user station with a different customized database for each different online service by a corresponding database function.

167. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 166, wherein portions of the database function instructions are downloaded from a corresponding online service in advance of their execution.

168. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 153, further comprising general purpose user interface instructions for facilitating the presentation of the graphical user interface.

169. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 153, wherein the graphical user interface operates as a customized element of a common user interface software package.

170. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 153, wherein the first instructions are updateable from a remote source for expanding the number of available online services.

171. (Currently Amended) A user station, comprising a processor and a computer-readable medium having instructions stored thereon, the instructions comprising:

first instructions, executable at a user station, that form an application programming interface (API) configured to provide a generic client interface for communicating a functional request associated with an application function to any one of a plurality of available online services;

second instructions, executable at the user station, ~~for directing to direct~~ the establishment and use of a communication link between the user station and an online service selected from the plurality of available online services; and

third instructions, executable at the user station, ~~for presenting to present~~ a graphical user interface, ~~generating generate~~ the functional request, and ~~communicating communicate~~ the functional request to the online service using the API,

wherein the user station is configured to download at least portions of the third instructions ~~are downloaded~~ from the online service, and

wherein the third instructions are configured to receive via the API a response to the functional request from the online service in the background, thereby permitting the graphical user interface to continue operation.

172. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 171, further comprising a set of translators and protocol drivers for establishing the communication link between the user station and the online service.

173. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 171, further comprising protocol translation instructions for establishing the communication link between the user station and the online service.

174. (Cancelled).

175. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 171, further comprising data transport instructions for effectuating data transfers between the user station and the online service via the established communication link.

176. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 175, wherein the data transport function uses an object manifest to effectuate data transfers.

177. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 176, wherein the API is configured to modify the object manifest.

178. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 177, wherein the API is configured to interconnect the data transfer function and a high-level software entity that can be invoked to modify the object manifest.

179. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 177, wherein the API is configured to interconnect the data transfer function and a high-level user interface that enables the user station to modify the object manifest.

180. (Cancelled).

181. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 171, wherein the first instructions are further configured to to present a list of the available online services.

182. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 171, further comprising data transport instructions for effectuating data transfers between the user station and a selected one of the available online services via a non-proprietary network.

183. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 182, wherein the non-proprietary network comprises the Internet.

184. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 171, further comprising database function instructions for presenting a different customized database for each different online service by a corresponding database function.

185. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 184, wherein portions of the database function instructions are downloaded from a corresponding online service.

186. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 171, further comprising general purpose user interface instructions for facilitating the presentation of the graphical user interface.

187. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 171, wherein the graphical user interface operates as a customized element of a common user interface software package.

188. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 171, wherein the first instructions are updatable from a remote source for expanding the number of available online services.

189. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 114, wherein the graphical user interface includes at least one element that is effected by instructions that are custom to the online service.

190. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the graphical user interface includes at least one element that is effected by instructions that are custom to the online service.

191. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 153, wherein the graphical user interface includes at least one element that is effected by instructions that are custom to the online service.

192. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 171, wherein the graphical user interface includes at least one element that is effected by instructions that are custom to the online service.

193. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 189, wherein portions of the at least one element are downloaded from the online service.

194. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 190, wherein portions of the at least one element are downloaded from the online service.

195. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 191, wherein portions of the at least one element are downloaded from the online service.

196. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 192, wherein portions of the at least one element are downloaded from the online service.

197. (Previously Presented) The computer program product as set forth in Claim 114, wherein the functional request is for updates to information stored at the user station.

198. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of Claim 197, wherein the third instructions are further configured to integrate the updates to information, received from the online service in response to the functional request, with the information stored at the user station.

199. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of Claim 114, wherein the third instructions are further configured to present different customized graphical user interfaces for different selected online services.

200. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the functional request is for updates to information stored at the user station.

201. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 200, wherein the third instructions are further configured to integrate the updates to information, received from the online service in response to the functional request, with the information stored at the user station.

202. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the third instructions are further configured to present different customized graphical user interfaces for different selected online services.